PAY-AS-YOU-THROW SUCCESS STORIES

Gainesville, Florida

Population:	96,000
Type of Community:	Suburban
Type of Program:	Cart-based Cans
Program Start Date:	October 1994

The results of the first year of our program were amazing. After implementing pay-as-you-throw, we watched our recycling rates soar!

Why Pay-As-You-Throw?

Before variable-rate pricing, the cost to individuals for service was hidden. Residential users did not have an apparent reason to limit their disposal habits. Now, Gainesville's variable-rate pricing generates a visible monthly charge that has resulted in a substantial reduction in both solid waste and the costs associated with its disposal.

How Does It Work?

In July 1994, the city of Gainesville entered into a contract with Waste Management of Central Florida, Inc., for the collection of residential solid waste and commingled recyclables and into another contract with Boone Waste Industries, Inc., for the collection of yard trash for recycling. The new contract for solid waste service included a variable rate for residential collections:

Gainesville's move to pay-as-you-throw did more than reduce waste and increase recycling–it created a more equitable system for residents.

City of Gainesville
SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT

July 25, 1996

Janice L. Canterbury
MC: 5306W
U.S. EPA
Municipal & Industrial Solid Waste Div.
401 M Street SW
Washington DC 20460

Dear Ms. Canterbury:

In July of 1994, the City of Gainesville entered into a contract with Waste Management of Central Florida, Inc., for the collection of residential solid waste and commingled recyclable collection, and another contract with Boone Waste Industries, Inc., for the collection of yard trash for recycling. The new contract for solid waste service included a variable rate for solid waste collection service: residents paid $13.50, 15.96 or 19.75 per month according to whether they placed 35, 64 or 96 gallons of solid waste at the curb for collection. Recycling service was unlimited. While residents had been receiving service for the collection of recyclables since 1989, the implementation of this program added brown paper bags, corrugated cardboard and phone books to the list of items recycled. The results of the first year of this program were amazing. The amount of solid waste collected decreased 20% and the recyclables recovered increased 35%! The total disposal tonnage decreased from 22,120 to 18,116. This resulted in a savings of $186,200 to the residential sector; or $7.95 per home.

Gainesville's move to a cart based, variable rate residential collection system did more than just increase the rate of recovery and minimize disposal needs. The distribution of system costs is more equitable. Residents make the choice of service delivery based on individual waste generation habits. This reduces the level of subsidy that unlimited, flat rate collection systems encounter.

Prior to variable rate pricing, the individualized cost for service was hidden. Residential users did not have an apparent reason for limiting their disposal habits. Gainesville's variable rate pricing creates a monthly charge that is visible which has resulted in a substantial reduction of solid waste associated with disposal.

If you have any further questions

residents pay $13.50, $15.96, or $19.75 per month according to whether they place 35, 64, or 96 gallons of solid waste at the curb for collection.

Recycling service is unlimited. While residents have had curbside collection of recyclables since 1989, the implementation of this program added brown paper bags, corrugated cardboard, and phone books to the list of items recycled.

Planning Ahead

Planning ahead was critical to the success of Gainesville's program. It was crucial for us to order our carts and public outreach publications far in advance of program implementation.

Success: Saving Money and Reducing Waste

The results of the first year of our program were amazing. The amount of solid waste collected decreased 18 percent, and the recyclables recovered increased 25 percent! The total disposal tonnage decreased from 22,120 to 18,116. This resulted in a savings of $186,200 to the residential sector, or $7.95 per home.

Gainesville's move to a cart-based, variable-rate residential collection system did more than just increase the rate of recovery and minimize disposal needs. The distribution of system costs is more equitable. Residents make the choice of service delivery based on individual waste-generation habits. This reduces the level of subsidy that unlimited, flat-rate collection systems encounter.

Gainesville's success story was compiled by Gina Hawkins, Recycling Coordinator, (352) 334-5040.